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HECTOR BERLIOZ AND RICHARD WAGNER

By JULIEN TIERSOT

I

HECTOR BERLIOZ, born in 1803 in a small town of southeastern France, within sight of the Alps, was a contemporary of the poets, artists and thinkers who devoted their genius to the triumph of the Romantic School—of Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Alfred de Musset, Balzac, Eugène Delacroix, Rude, Michelet, Edgar Quinet, etc.—and in the domain of music he occupies a place equivalent to that held by each of these great men in his specialty. Coming to Paris at the age of eighteen, with the intention of engaging in pursuits wholly different from those to which he finally dedicated himself, he first of all (as a student of music) came under the influence of the classic masters whose works were then in the musico-dramatic repertory,—chiefly Gluck, the last interpreter, and a powerful one, of the spirit of the *ancien régime*, and his successors, Méhul, Lesueur, Spontini, the representatives of the grand musical traditions of the French Revolution and the Empire. His most lasting impression from hearing them was the passionate emotion which breathes in their works, together with the character of grandeur wherewith they stamped their conceptions; as to their forms, whose excessive regularity and too bare simplicity comported but ill with the impetuosity of his genius, he imitated them very sparingly. But he soon found other models when he gained an intimacy with the works of two German masters, Weber and Beethoven, still living while he was yet a youth. From the former he borrowed the picturesque orchestral coloring, and lost no time in adding to the treasure committed into his keeping. The latter, besides an inimitable genius, revealed to him the forms of the symphony; Berlioz forthwith adopted them in preference to those of the opera, recognizing in them a more favorable medium for conveying the impulsion of his individual feeling, for giving full scope to his passions and his dreams, for representing in tones the images born of an imagination at times erratic, but always creative.

And his first attempt was a masterstroke. In the memorable year 1830, when Victor Hugo gave the first representation of *Hernani*, and a fresh popular revolution definitively abolished the old order, Berlioz wrote and procured the first audition of his *Symphonie fantastique*, a work of marked originality and novelty, in which the orchestra attains to a puissance of expression and a vividness of coloration previously unapproached. Continuing on his course, he composed several further orchestral works, some of which are veritable musical pictures, glowing with color, like the symphony *Harold en Italie*; others, like the *Requiem*, evoke the mysteries of the great beyond with an incomparable grandeur; while in a third symphony, *Roméo et Juliette*, in which he mingled voices with the instruments, he makes the orchestra speak with as much eloquence, and almost equal precision, as the Shakespearean word whose interpretation he had undertaken could command. He thus, at the very outset, reached the loftiest realization of the symphonic drama, whereof, in this work, he supplied the prototype. By such bold innovations he had not failed to bewilder the intellects of a public so ill-prepared to appreciate art of this nature. An opera, *Benvenuto Cellini*, vivid and colorful as his purely symphonic works, had come to grief, and this failure had caused its author great chagrin. However, he was surrounded by a chosen few who had penetrated his arcanum and foresaw the future of his efforts; and when *Roméo et Juliette* appeared (in 1839—he was then thirty-six years of age) he was held to be a genius whose very superiority rendered him inaccessible to the vulgar.

Richard Wagner, per contra, was ten years younger; and although a disparity of ten years seems to be effaced between men who have reached maturity or old age, it is very noticeable at their entrance into the public arena. He was born in 1813, in Leipzig, the town already known to fame as the dwelling-place of the great Bach. Having passed his childhood in an artistic environment, he early devoted himself to music and the theatre; took the first steps in his career as an orchestral conductor in various provincial towns of Germany and Russia, and tried his hand at composition—not without feeling his way and being subjected to very diverse influences, like that of Weber and the masters of German romanticism, or that of Italian opera à la Bellini, or from that of Adolphe Adam's comedy-opera up to French grand opera, of which latter the author of *La Vestale*, Spontini, had furnished him with superb examples. Being thus predisposed, he produced two highly dissimilar dramatic works—

Das Liebesverbot and *Rienzi*. But where was he to bring out works of such calibre? The small cities on which he exercised an influence as music-director were far from affording him sufficient resources. He did not hesitate. He betook himself to Paris. This was in the summer of 1839; Wagner had just reached the age of twenty-six.

He arrived in the French capital on September the 16th—and on the following 24th of November Berlioz gave the first hearing of his *Roméo et Juliette*. In the meantime the young German had been doing his utmost to establish connections in the great city. It was at Schlesinger's (the publisher), a German like himself, and to whom he had been introduced by another German, Meyerbeer, that he met Berlioz, then a contributor to the "Gazette Musicale." Wagner so quickly succeeded in attracting his attention and engaging his personal interest, that Berlioz included him among the number of those who enjoyed gratuitous admission to the first performance of his work. I have found proof of this in a list of invitations written by Berlioz's own hand, and deposited among his papers in the library of the Conservatory; in it the name of "R. Wagner" is entered for a seat.

So it happened that the future author of *Tristan und Isolde*, almost immediately after his arrival in Paris, was afforded an opportunity of hearing French music of a sort quite different from that for which he was prepared; his acquaintance with it having been confined to the *Postillon de Longjumeau* and the *Muette de Portici*. And, in his posthumous autobiography, he admits that the impression it made on him was both extremely vivid and unexpected:

It was unquestionably a totally new world for me. First of all, I was almost bewildered by the puissance of an orchestral virtuosity of which I had never dreamed before. The reckless boldness and severe precision with which the most daring combinations were attacked, made them fairly palpable. They took me by storm, and impetuously fanned the flame of my personal feeling for music and poetry. I was all ear for things of which I had never had the slightest notion, and which I sought to explain to myself.

Afterwards he heard the *Symphonie fantastique* and the *Harold* symphony, listening to the former "with an emotion full of admiration," and conscientiously analyzing the latter. Still later, in July, 1840, when Berlioz had brought out a work of vast proportions, composed on the occasion of a popular festival, the *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale* for the victims of the July revolution, Wagner paid homage to the grandeur of this creation;

he states that on hearing it "he was unable to resist a strange and profound feeling of respect for the individuality of this marvellous master," and that he then comprehended "the greatness and the energy of this incomparable artist-nature, unique in the world."

It is not as though he had surrendered himself completely to the spell, for, in conclusion, he sums up his impressions as follows:

After the hearing, however, I was haunted by the uneasiness one feels when confronted by some strange thing which will never become congenial; and this uneasiness compelled me to ask myself why Berlioz's music should waken my enthusiasm one day, and should repel me, or be positively tiresome, at another time. For years Berlioz presented a problem at once perplexing and irritating, which I did not succeed in solving until a long time afterward.—Nevertheless, (he concludes,) I still felt like a pupil in his presence.

Such is the sincere narration, written down for himself, wherein Wagner describes his first memories of Berlioz.

But, at the same time, he communicated his impressions on the subject to the public—to the German public. Let us compare them with those whose mark is recorded in the private diary from which, thirty years after his death, the secrets of his real thought were made known to us. What he wrote, as the correspondent of an art-review ("Europa") in Dresden, when the period of his sojourn in France was drawing to a close (May 5, 1841), follows:

The *Symphonie fantastique* is a strange, unheard-of thing. A teeming, towering imagination, an inspiration of epic energy, vomit as it were from a crater a turbid torrent of passions. Herein one can distinguish smoke-clouds of colossal proportions, lighted up solely by lightning-flashes, striped by fiery zones and fashioned into wavering phantoms. Everything is extravagant, audacious,—but extremely disagreeable.

As for *Roméo et Juliette*, this is the record of his impressions in the German periodical:

On hearing this symphony I experienced the most poignant regrets. In this composition, side by side with passages of incontestable genius, we find such a mass of transgressions against good taste and artistic economy, that I cannot help wishing that Berlioz, before the performance of his work, had submitted it to such a man as Cherubini.

The above verdict is notably severer than the one transmitted in the autobiography. It is true that Wagner unreservedly praises the *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale*, which he recognizes as possessing a "popular" character in the most ideal sense of

the term, and rather "national" than "popular," for (he adds) "from the *Postillon de Longjumeau* to this Symphony of July there is a long step to be taken." In these last words one may see the surprise of the German musician on discovering that a Frenchman could compose in any other style than that of opéra comique; indeed, in the very beginning of his article he set forth the following observations:

From remotest Germany the spirit of Beethoven has breathed upon him; and assuredly there have been hours when Berlioz wished that he was a German. In such hours it was, that his genius urged him to write in imitation of the great Master, to express the same things that he felt were expressed in his works. But no sooner had he grasped his pen, than the natural ebullition of his French blood regained the ascendancy.

We shall have to return to the ideas contained in this last quotation. For the present, let us be content to note the dissimilarity between Wagner's opinions as recorded in the sincerity of his personal recollections and as formulated in an article for publication, designed to influence the judgment of his compatriots. How different was the procedure of Schumann, who, in an article on this same *Symphonie fantastique* in which Wagner affected to discern nothing but dense clouds of smoke, heralded the advent of Berlioz as that of an original genius.

"Berlioz presented a problem at once perplexing and irritating," said Wagner. Very good. But why, then, at a time when he had not found the solution of this "problem," should he have given publicity only to those points which struck him as the most questionable, whereas, when left to solitary meditation, he could visualize their significance under a sensibly more favorable aspect?

As for Berlioz, he, for his part, was all courtesy and kindness for his young confrère. He doubtless kept him at a certain distance, and did not meet him on a familiar footing; there was no reason whatever for his doing so, and no other Frenchman would have acted differently. The only friends that Wagner had during this first sojourn in Paris were some Germans who had come, like himself, to seek their fortune, or who possibly had reasons for putting the frontier betwixt them and their own dear country, and were none too well off. "In Paris (so he writes again) you cannot find one artist who has time to make friends with another; each lives and moves for himself alone." In spite of this, Berlioz, whenever they happened to meet, did not fail to show him his good-will. As we have seen, he invited him to the first perform-

ance of his new work, *Roméo et Juliette*, and to other of his concerts; he himself attended the one at which was heard the sole work that Wagner succeeded in bringing out at Paris, an overture to *Christopher Columbus* whose reception was not favorable; and on this occasion accosted him with a few words of kindly encouragement. Finally, after Wagner had published a sketch entitled "A Visit to Beethoven" in the "Gazette Musicale," Berlioz complimented him upon it, not merely verbally, but by penning some sentences which—a rare favor!—were printed in his musical feuilleton in the "Journal des Débats." Thus it was that Wagner's name was first introduced to the French public, with praise, by the pen of Berlioz.

It should not be objected, that this was a trifling matter. It was all that Berlioz could do for a stranger artist just making his début (he himself then being only a "young master")—an artist wholly unknown and, to speak impartially, with nothing to give. For if Wagner came as early as 1839 with the—very German—notion of conquering France, every one will agree that he set about it the wrong way, being quite unprepared to insure his conquest. We must remember that the Wagner of 1839 was not the author of *Lohengrin*, *Die Meistersinger* and *Parsifal*; all that he brought us, his sole arms of offense, his sole munitions, consisted of the manuscripts of *Das Liebesverbot* and *Rienzi*, two operas written in German, neither of which was in any way representative of Wagnerian genius, and which he himself later disowned. His efforts to have them brought out in Paris led to nothing, which was undoubtedly fortunate, because the probable outcome of their performance would have been the failure of works so immature and lacking stylistic form. Under these circumstances he could blame only himself and his own imprudence that he vegetated in misery; he only needed to stay away! Besides, he took his revenge by sending the periodicals of his country ill-natured articles of whose tenor we already have some idea from the above quotations concerning Berlioz. When writing the story of his life he did not conceal the fact that, in taking it upon himself to communicate his impressions of Paris to German readers, he had been tempted by the thought that he could express "the contempt which the ways of this city inspired in him." And that, again, is "very German"; of this we have had far more recent proofs. In a word, if Wagner, in 1839, did not succeed in winning the place in Paris to which he aspired, he had only himself to thank. As for his French fellow-musicians, his elders, they all treated him quite as well as he could have expected; and

Berlioz, in particular, received him with a cordiality fully on a par with his deserts on this, their first meeting.

After a stay in France of two years and a half, Wagner returned to Germany in the spring of 1842. He took back with him a new work wherewith he had enriched his repertory, the first in which his individuality was manifested—*Der fliegende Holländer*, both poem and music having been written by him in the environs of Paris. Having brought about the performance of this work, and also of *Rienzi*, at Dresden, he settled in that city, where he was speedily engaged as Kapellmeister and Music Director at the Royal Theatre.

Berlioz, on his part, had realized the project, conceived long before, of going to Germany to give concerts in which he could make his music known to the compatriots of Beethoven. He reached Dresden towards the beginning of 1843, on the very day of the formal induction of the new Kapellmeister into his office.

Thus they met again a few months after their leave-taking in Paris.

Berlioz therefore had an opportunity to hear both these works of Wagner's, or at the very least *Der fliegende Holländer* and the second half of *Rienzi* (for this last-named opera is so long that it had become customary, from the outset, to give it on two evenings—a foretaste, as it were, of the *Nibelung's Ring* in four). He made a report on them, on his return, in an article for the "Journal des Débats" which was reprinted later in two of his books, and was highly favorable to the author of the works;—though not withholding certain criticisms justified by a style frequently too diffuse, or sometimes extravagant, in their music, faults quite natural in the first essays of a young composer. Berlioz lauded the effort which had culminated in the production of two works wherein both poem and music were the creation of the same author, saying:

It must be admitted that men are rarely found who are capable of twice accomplishing successfully this dual literary and musical task, and that M. Wagner has given a proof of capacity more than sufficient to attract our attention and interest.

Alluding to the fortunes of the artist, the article proceeded:

After having undergone, in France, a thousand privations and all the sufferings attendant on obscurity, Richard Wagner, on returning to Saxony, his native land, had the courage to undertake and the satisfaction of accomplishing the composition of the two operas through which his merit has been established. The king of Saxony (he continues) perfectly understood the situation; and on the day when, by giving his

first Kapellmeister an associate like Richard Wagner, he assured the existence of the latter, the friends of art should have said to His Majesty what Jean Bart responded to Louis XIV when the monarch told him that he had created him rear-admiral: "Sire, you have done well!"

It was by such generous praise that Berlioz, who had previously informed the readers of the leading French periodical at that time of Wagner's literary firstlings, was the first to announce to them his début as the author of musical dramas; it will be seen that he did so in terms far more amiable than Wagner employed in his critiques, sent from Paris to the German papers, of Berlioz's works.

As to their personal relations during this sojourn of the French master in Dresden, our sole source of knowledge is a few observations which he himself recorded. Wagner—who otherwise made daily notes of the most inconsiderable events of his life in the blankbook which afterwards did duty in the editing of "Mein Leben"—has nothing to say on this subject, and alludes to Berlioz's visit only in a brief observation occasioned by one of his "appreciations" of Frau Schroeder-Devrient. Berlioz, on the other hand, while remarking on the preoccupation of the young Kapellmeister and "the first flush of a very natural delight" which infected him on the day of his induction into office, writes: "He had to exercise his authority for the first time by assisting me in my rehearsals, which he did with zeal and most obligingly." Why must a certain letter (as yet unpublished) which Berlioz soon after wrote to another Dresden artist, Concertmeister Lipinski, whom he had occasion to praise ungrudgingly and unstintedly, give us the impression of a certain uneasiness with regard to the kind intentions which he predicates of his colleague? In this letter we read: "You will see, on reading my letter on Dresden, that I did not care to give room to the suspicion suggested by you with respect to Wagner." A suspicion? And of what? Could it be that Wagner, under the cloak of an amicable attitude, was attempting to place obstacles in the path of his French guest? Perish the thought! for Berlioz himself repudiates it. None the less, it clearly appears that at this first meeting of the two masters in Germany, perspicacious minds had recognized that they were rivals rather than friends.

Seven further years went by, during which they both wrote momentous works, and at the same time arrived at disastrous developments in their career. Berlioz composed the *Damnation de Faust*, whose failure caused his ruin. Seeking exile from France, he travelled to far countries, giving concerts in Russia, trying to

make a place for himself in England, and—rightly or wrongly—dreading the consequences which the Revolution of 1848 might bring in its train both for the arts and for his own person.—Wagner created *Tannhäuser*, whose success in Dresden was by no means uncontested (for the time had not yet come when the public was prepared to comprehend and appreciate this new art of Wagner, any more than that of Berlioz). He wrote *Lohengrin*, but could not bring it out. Then he took part in the revolt which, in Germany, followed the French revolution of 1848; he fled the country, was condemned *in contumaciam*, and lived in exile for twelve years or more.

His first idea was to take refuge in Paris and seek to win a position there in the musical world. To help him, he counted on Berlioz, the only French artist with whom, as it seemed, his genius predestined him to consort. But—from a practical standpoint—to what illusions did he yield himself! How was it possible for Berlioz to serve him in an attempt to facilitate an impossible task, seeing that he himself had failed and was beset by so many difficulties! In both cases, misconception of their art was greater than ever. Just then nothing could get a hearing in musical Paris but operas which followed an Italian formula already in its decadence, and comedy-operas growing more and more trivial in style. The composers who had succeeded in forcing their way to the front, to the exclusion of all others, were not merely Donizetti, Auber, Halévy, Adolphe Adam, but men of mediocrity even in their own line, like Carafa, Clapisson, and a score of others who (as the great Corneille put it) do not deserve the honor of being mentioned, but who were entrenched in all the places. Above all these throned Meyerbeer, creator of the awesome illusion that he alone represented “grand art.” Between him and Wagner misunderstandings had arisen almost immediately after their first interviews, and Berlioz conducted himself towards him with a courteous reserve whose appearance concealed a reality of sentiments in no way amicable on either side.

Wagner required considerable time to discover that there was no place for him in such an environment. Liszt, who had aided him to escape from Germany, and continually wrought in his behalf with the most generous zeal, gave him to understand that he would be doing Berlioz an injustice to demand of him what he could not do for himself. So Wagner withdrew to Switzerland, where he worked for several years in retirement.

We have just witnessed the entrance on the stage of a new personage who will hereafter play an important rôle between

Berlioz and Wagner. While the memorable events chronicled above were taking place in the lives of these two, great changes were likewise going on in Liszt's affairs. After a precocious youth, in the course of which he had achieved the most dazzling successes ever known to a virtuoso, his ambition sought another path to glory, and he retired to a small German town, Weimar, famed for many years by reason of the part it had played in the life of intellect, and which he now proposed to elevate into a centre of musical art.

Franz Liszt, born in 1811, and consequently two years older than Wagner and eight younger than Berlioz, had known the latter since 1830; he had attended the concert at which the *Symphonie fantastique* obtained its first hearing, and manifested an enthusiasm for the work which (as we may imagine) touched its author. From that day they were friends, and the bonds of their affection grew ever closer as time went on.

His sympathies for Wagner were not awakened so spontaneously; for some time, indeed, the two future friends regarded each other with a certain degree of suspicion. But on gaining a better acquaintance with the work of the artist, Liszt conceived a growing cordiality for the man. At the very time when he had brought out *Tannhäuser* in the Weimar theatre, and Wagner had come to see him and to assist at the production, they were informed of the consequences threatening the latter on account of his participation in the revolutionary movement in Dresden. Liszt assisted in his escape, and kept up a correspondence through which he gave him advice and aid.

Wagner took with him the score of *Lohengrin*, already finished but not published. He no longer cherished a hope of bringing out this German work in Germany, whence he was excluded, and so had perforce to resign himself to its non-existence for the world.

Liszt did not hesitate. Disregarding hostile opinion, he himself produced the work on the stage of his little court theatre, from which, after winning success, it found its way to all the important cities of the Germanic Confederation.

Following this first and fortunate attempt, he turned to Berlioz with a request for his *Benvenuto Cellini*, which had failed some twelve years earlier at the Opéra in Paris, and whose rehabilitation he contemplated. All was done according to his wish, and the theatre at Weimar could pride itself on having set a good example by bringing the works of Wagner and Berlioz before the German public.

Thus there was formed at Weimar a sort of art-association, a musical triple alliance combining the far-famed names of Berlioz, Wagner, and Liszt.

Berlioz manifested deep gratitude to his friend. He himself came on to assist at a "Berlioz Week" which Liszt had arranged in his honor, and experienced keen delight on recognizing the happy result of his efforts in favor of the new art.

As for Wagner, he could come neither to Weimar nor to any other place in Germany, and so was devoted to solitary seclusion abroad. But he wrote—he wrote a great deal; Liszt was among those to whom, in his letters, he confided his most intimate thoughts. He also indited books which constituted, so to speak, a profound self-examination. Therein the artist sought in his own past career, as well as in history and the contemporary status of the art, after the reasons for bringing about the revolution in the musical drama which he himself was to consummate.

He wrote; besides that, he talked; his words were occasionally carried far away, and it would seem that they testified to a scantier appreciation of Liszt's undertaking than one might have expected. Oh! Wagner doubtless found it quite right that *Lohengrin* should be represented at Weimar; but at the same time his behavior was more than cool with regard to the attempted resurrection of *Benvenuto Cellini*. His remarks reverberated so loudly that Liszt felt himself obliged to respond thus:

Why bring out *Cellini* at Weimar? (he writes to Wagner on April the 7th, 1852). That is a question which I should not answer to everybody, but to which the practical reply will be such that *we* can be satisfied with it. Maybe you yourself have not as fully realized the practical side of the matter as you will later.

Truth to tell, these same explanations strike us as contracting the scope of an initiative which at first view seemed to spring from a loftily artistic purpose, and which he who grasped it now appears to debase to the level of the devices of a less disinterested diplomacy or political expediency. Even to this, be it noted, Wagner did not wish to grant houseroom. With eyes fixed on a different objective, he would have no one pay attention to anything else. This he flatly stated in his answer to Liszt: "It is absolutely impossible for me to believe in the consequences you associate with the representation of *Cellini*."

Liszt, however, sought to explain himself and defend his friend's work, "which ought not (he said) to be thrown aside because of all the nonsense set afloat concerning it." He added:

"*Cellini* is an altogether remarkable work; I feel sure that it would please you in many respects."

But Wagner was impervious to argument. Wholly absorbed in maturing his conception of the art-work of the future, he would have had the art of the past conform itself to his ideal in advance, and found fault with Berlioz for having followed a path other than the one which he himself had not yet opened. In so doing, his use of somewhat uncourteous terms was accompanied by a rather extensive lack of knowledge of the subject. He roughly condemned *Benvenuto* as an old work of some twelve years ago, which deserved nothing better than to be left to its unhappy fate. Incidentally he spoke of the "platitudes in the Faust symphony" (meaning the *Damnation de Faust*, which is not a symphony at all), deploring the "aberrations which, if Berlioz continued to pursue them, could not fail to render him totally ridiculous." Now, it is a well-authenticated fact that when Wagner wrote thus, HE DID NOT KNOW ONE NOTE of the *Damnation de Faust*, either from hearing or by reading; for the work was unpublished, and had been performed only in Paris, or (fragmentarily) in two or three German towns where Wagner had not been; as for *Benvenuto Cellini*, whose performances at the Opéra in Paris antedated his first visit to that city by more than a year, his ignorance was equally complete. Hence, it was solely on the opinions of others—taking his cue from what Liszt called "the nonsense set afloat"—or simply because swayed by a hostile prejudice precariously founded on his superficial acquaintance with earlier compositions, that Wagner thus condemned to silence and obscurity the works of his precursor, a masterful genius, whose stimulating influence he had felt in bygone years and whom he had sometimes praised in terms very different from those which he now employed.

The fact is, that just then his mind was absorbed in its conception of that new art—a conception which was later to culminate in the series of definitive works wherein the glory of Wagner is enshrined. In preparation for them he was occupied, in the solitude of his exile, with the composition of literary writings in which he examined, from an entirely novel point of view, the conditions essential to the existence of the art, considering its past as well as its future.

With regard to the art of the future, he took upon himself the task of its creation, and to him it seemed something quite different from art-creations of the past, which, from whatever side he viewed them, appeared to him as founded in error. In

his great theoretical work "Oper und Drama" he devotes the entire first part to the tracing of error in Gluck, in Mozart, in Weber, in Rossini, even in Beethoven; then he takes up Berlioz. The three pages which he devotes to him are so full of significance and so intimately connected with the subject of the present article, that we must repeat them word for word:

It was in Paris, where all tendencies in art are seized as in a maelstrom, that a Frenchman gifted with extraordinary musical intelligence forced the above-mentioned tendency to its extremest limit. Hector Berlioz is the immediate and most vigorous offshoot of Beethoven on the very side from which the latter turned away the moment he—as I indicated above—proceeded from the sketch to the actual painting. The bold, rough strokes of the pen with which Beethoven often vaguely outlines his experiments for the discovery of new means of expression in hot haste and without careful selection, fell as nearly the sole heritage of the great artist into the avid pupil's hands. Was it a foreboding of the fact that Beethoven's most finished picture, his last symphony, would also be the last word in this domain of art, that withheld Berlioz—who likewise had a mind to create grand works—by a sense of selfish calculation, from searching out the Master's real incentive behind these paintings—an incentive whose aim was assuredly anything rather than the satisfaction of fantastic wilfulness and whimsicality? It is certain that Berlioz's artistic inspiration was begotten by his fixed, fascinated gaze on the said strangely involved pen-strokes; he was seized with dismayful rapture on beholding these magical hieroglyphs, wherein the Master had left the traces of his own rapture and dismay, thereby giving to the world the secret which he never could divulge in music, yet for which he dreamed music to be the sole means of expression. While gazing thus, a dizziness came over him; the motley tangle of a chaotic witches' dance swam before his vision, whose natural clearness gave way to a vague multipolarity through which his dazzled eye appeared to view forms of vital hue and mould, while, in truth, his fancy was mocked by a tribe of bony phantoms. But this whole phantasmagoria was, in reality, only Berlioz's own fevered fancy; once the dream was over, he awoke like an unnerved victim of the opium habit to the chill of an empty reality, which he sought to revivify by an artificial auto-suggestion of his delirious dream; an attempt in which he succeeded only by dint of a painfully laborious elaboration and manipulation of his musical stock in trade.

In the attempt to bring to paper the weird creations of his heated imagination, and to set them before the skeptical and prosaical audiences of his Parisian environment both plainly and convincingly, Berlioz spurred his vast musical intelligence to efforts never dreamed of theretofore. What he had to say to his hearers was so fantastic, so unusual, so wholly unnatural, that he could not say it straightforwardly in plain, simple language; he required a monster apparatus of the most complicated machines, so that with the aid of a mechanism organized down to the least detail, and adjusted to meet every demand, he could set forth whatever a simple human throat could not possibly express—just

because of its unhuman quality. To-day we can account for the supernatural marvels by which the priesthood once deluded childlike men into the firm belief that some high god was revealing himself to them; it was mere machinery that wrought those miracles. In the same way the Supernatural, just because it is the Unnatural, is now served up before wonderstricken audiences merely by the magic of mechanism; and such magic is, in very truth, the orchestra of Berlioz. Every height and every depth in the capacity of this mechanism has been explored by Berlioz in developing a positively astounding proficiency; and if it is proper to consider the inventors of our present-day industrial apparatus as benefactors of the bondsmen of the modern state, we should extol Berlioz as the true redeemer of our absolute world of music; for he it is who made it possible for musicians to obtain the most extraordinary effects for the tawdriest and least artistic aspects of music-making by means of an unheard-of multiplicity of merely mechanical devices.

At the outset of his artistic career Berlioz himself was assuredly not tempted to seek fame as a mere mechanical inventor; he was moved by a true artistic impulse, and this impulse was of an ardent, consuming sort. The fact that, to satisfy this impulse, he should have been forced by the morbid, unhuman strain in the above-mentioned tendency to the point where the Artist was submerged by the Apparatus, where the superhuman, fantastic visionary was swallowed up in an all-devouring materialism—this it is that makes Berlioz serve not only as an awful example, but still more as a most lamentable phenomenon; for he is still consumed by genuine artistic longings, though buried beyond hope of escape beneath the mass of his machinery.

He is the tragic victim of a tendency whose triumphs have been exploited, from another side, with the most impudent insensibility and the most self-satisfied indifference imaginable. . . .

These few pages inspire us with very mingled emotions.

And first of all, we cannot escape a feeling of wellnigh painful surprise on realizing the kind of infuriation with which Wagner pounces on the works of an artist, where everything would seem to require him to make a less malevolent estimate.

According to him, all of Beethoven that Berlioz was capable of assimilating was a few "strokes of the pen" which were nothing but the leavings of his art! For the living creations of the symphonist he substituted phantoms of artificial mould! He invented a mechanism which was naught but a snare and a delusion! He lost himself in a barren materialism! And this is what Wagner has to say now—the same Wagner who, on hearing the first performance of *Roméo et Juliette*, felt himself enthralled from the very first; who somewhat later admits (as we shall see) that the love-song, the essential theme of that work, "overwhelmed him with a transport of delight," that "the scene is admirably thrilling in its principal motifs," and who (as we shall show further on)

paid yet further homage to the inspiration and emotional genius of Berlioz.

As for the orchestral apparatus, Wagner did not despise it when he himself employed it. For the moment it will serve our purpose to note that he recognized explicitly, through his own observation, that its invention was due primarily to Berlioz.

But he simply republishes dull-witted criticisms when he affects to see nothing in Berlioz but a composer of descriptive music having no other aim in art than the imitation of natural and external sounds: which he does not assert in so many words, but which is plainly implied in the totality of his explanations. Now, it is not accurate to say that the essential principle in Berlioz's art is the imitation of the sounds of nature. Although the French master has given proof of a rare superiority in the eliciting of sonorous images, that is not his sole merit; and even if, in certain pages of his works, he has vastly enriched a region in the domain of musical art wherein Beethoven before him, and Wagner himself after, made numerous incursions, it does not follow that the essential idea which possessed him was not the expression of the effects and emotions of the human spirit, the lofty aim of music. The reprobation directed at him by Wagner is, therefore, in this particular, wholly without justification.

Having said this, it should be acknowledged that Wagner's intent in penning these lines was not to make a personal attack on Berlioz or by reason of rivalry in point of production. "Oper und Drama," the work in which they are found, is one of those revolutionary essays in which the author manifests his resolution to destroy everything so that he may rebuild it afterwards. In it the greatest masters of the past share the fate of Berlioz, who might, at bottom, have felt flattered to be mentioned among such a glorious company! Shall it be taken as a proof of an evil disposition, if he did not feel so?—However this may be, these propositions are put forth in a book dealing with the highest—and frequently the most recondite—questions in esthetics. But mark well the injustice of men! While Wagner was occupied far more with what he proposed to realize through his art of the future than with what had already been accomplished by artists of the past and of his own time, his readers were chiefly interested in his direct personal imputations! He himself declared, in the preface to the second edition of his book, that for a time people had read only the first part (that in which he destroys), and that "the amusing observations found therein" were all on which their attention was fixed. Yes, undoubtedly—it is amusing to

see glory brought low! Any "scene of butchery" has power to attract the gaze of the galleries—and when merely the dead are slain again, only half the harm is done, for, after all, such sport hurts nobody. But it may have the disadvantage of annoying or irritating the living. That was something which Wagner lost sight of when writing such of his "amusing observations" as concerned Berlioz. For really, a friend who thus expresses himself about his friend may very easily be regarded as an enemy!

It may be imagined that Wagner, after these pronouncements which he had penned in solitude were sent abroad by his German publisher, may have experienced a momentary uneasiness when, upon reëntering the civilized world, he considered the prospect of being brought face to face with Berlioz.

It is known that he wrote to Liszt, at a time when he was thinking of making a pleasure trip to France, "The idea of going to Paris begins to be almost unpleasant to me. I am afraid of Berlioz. With my bad French, I should be lost." (Letter of Sept. 12, 1853.)

On his part, Berlioz wrote (end of July): "Like yourself, I am persuaded that Wagner and I can get along together if he will only smooth the way a bit. As for the 'few lines' (*quelques lignes*) of which you speak, I have never read them, I do not feel the slightest resentment with regard to them, and I myself have fired so many pistol-shots into the legs of the passers-by that I am not surprised when they happen to be returned."

After all, their meeting (at which Liszt made the third party) was pacific, in appearance at least. In October, 1853, Berlioz and Wagner met in Paris at the house where Liszt was bringing up his children, on a day which was doubtless that of the first interview between Richard and little Cosima. He was requested to communicate to the company some portion of the new works on which he was then engaged; he drew from his pocket the final act of the poem of *Götterdämmerung*, and Berlioz had to listen to its reading in German, "which he did (so writes Wagner) with gentlemanly amiability." He invited them to breakfast with him the day following.

Eighteen months later, in the spring of 1855, they met again in London, both having been engaged at the same time to conduct the orchestras of two rival societies; and their relations were then so good that one might have expected a sincere friendship to be cemented between them. They dined together, and passed several evenings at each other's lodgings or at the homes of mutual acquaintances, and Wagner thereupon indulged in his

customary exuberance; he states that Berlioz, "ordinarily somewhat reserved, thawed out visibly during these cordial meetings," and that he "appreciated his cheerful familiarity." They conversed on the most diverse subjects, recalled their artistic experiences, and related to each other details concerning the masters they had known. Naturally, Wagner could not avoid giving way to his penchant for the discussion of philosophical questions; gradually gaining confidence in his French, he finally undertook to reveal to Berlioz, with a vast display of dialectics, the secrets of artistic conception, which he explained as resulting from the intertwining and combination of psychic or other influences on the spiritual faculties; etc. Berlioz, on whom this philosophical jargon did not impose, smilingly replied with the simple remark, "We call that digesting"; and Wagner was astonished that he should "so swiftly comprehend his difficult explanations." Probably neither of them was aware that Berlioz had merely repeated an observation made by Descartes on one of the opening pages of his "*Discours de la méthode*," where he speaks of "those who best digest their ideas in order to render them clear and intelligible." Thus it was that German philosophy and French thought confronted each other on that night in London when two musicians were exchanging confidences!

Touching their interview, Berlioz testified to no smaller satisfaction. He wrote to Liszt:

Wagner is superb in his ardor, in his warmth of heart, and I admit that even his violent moods transport me.—There is something singularly attractive about him; and although we both have our asperities, these asperities at least fit into each other.

To another correspondent he confirms the same impressions, saying,

He is very engaging in his ideas and his conversation.—After the concert he renewed his pledges of friendship, he kissed me impetuously, saying that he had been sadly prejudiced against me; he wept, he stamped the floor—and scarcely had he made his departure when "*The Musical World*" published those passages from his book in which he hauls me over the coals in the most humorous and ingenious fashion.

This ending was to be foreseen! The passage in question are the extracts from "*Oper und Drama*" given above, at which Berlioz chose to laugh. "'Twas better thus than to complain," as our fabulist has it.

As for Wagner, he could not refrain from finishing his depiction of these same interviews by ascribing mean motives to his new-

found friend. After stating that their farewell meeting had been cooler than the one preceding, he asserted that Berlioz was "vexed" at the over-enthusiastic reception accorded him by the public at his last concert; a wholly gratuitous imputation, for if a certain restraint were manifested in the cordiality of this leave-taking, we have just seen that it arose from a reason quite other than that which Wagner insinuates.

At all events, Liszt, the recipient of confidences from both parties, was happy in the thought that he had not wasted his time in the rôle of a musical diplomat which he had been playing for several years.

This epoch did, in fact, mark a turning-point. Strongly opposed by the critics, and still uncomprehended by the majority of the public, the new school had begun to rivet the attention of an enthusiastic élite. It had received a label which at the outset had been applied in derision: it was dubbed the "music of the future"! But while the crowd was laughing, Liszt haughtily took up the gauntlet and declared that, in very truth, the art of which he had made Weimar the rallying-point was indeed the art of the future. Nor did he indulge in self-delusion; the twentieth century is at hand to prove his claim.

The Weimar group, therefore, had its banner, its device, and—in Liszt himself—its standard-bearer.

Who was to be the commander-in-chief?

Two names were on every one's lips—Berlioz and Wagner. Some even began to pronounce them in the inverted order—Wagner and Berlioz. For the age had arrived when priority of birth no longer counted for much; and Wagner, then but little beyond his fortieth birthday, seemed in the depth of his exile to have attained a grade of service which placed him on an equality with the elder musician.

Nevertheless, and from all sides, homage was still done the latter; and despite certain misgivings, it appeared for a time as though Berlioz had made up his mind to accept the post of honor toward which the force of circumstances was bearing him. He remained in constant and always affectionate relations with Liszt; he maintained a cordial correspondence with Peter Cornelius and Hans von Bülow, both adherents of the group. When submitting to the latter, in 1856, a proposition for the performance of certain works, he wrote: "The outcome of this would be very favorable and highly important *for the cause*." From time to time he wrote to Wagner, garnishing his compliments with facetious familiarities and puns; he sent him the scores of his new

compositions, requesting that of *Tannhäuser* in exchange; as for Wagner, he wrote to Liszt asking for the loan of the scores of Berlioz's symphonies, which he desired to study with care: "I must say that I am strongly inclined to become well acquainted with them." Be it remarked, in passing, that this sentence contains the admission that he was not at all familiar with the works which he, none the less, had freely criticized.

This era of good-will was not destined to endure. In the first place, between Berlioz and Wagner there were deep-seated causes for misunderstanding, for reasons of art on which we shall not expatiate at present, intending to explain them further on; for the moment suffice it to say that, although we do not know as much concerning Berlioz's opinion about Wagner's music as of Wagner's on that of Berlioz, (Wagner's opinions having been expressed quite frequently both in private and in public,) we are, however, well aware that Berlioz's attitude was not much more sympathetic, and that he no further approved of Wagner's tendencies than Wagner admired his.

As regards personal causes, they are readily deduced when we consider that Berlioz and Wagner were just then in the position of two potentates at their accession, each of whom wished to extend his sway over the world. How could war fail to result from such rivalry? To prevent it, one or the other would have been obliged to make sweeping concessions and to accept second place. But who could require such a sacrifice from a man conscious of his power and his greatness? Neither Berlioz nor Wagner was disposed, in point of character, to consent to it, and we can hardly blame them.

Wagner, especially, was aggressive by nature, and never felt any scruples at establishing himself in the domain of others.

We know him thoroughly, now that he has told the tale of his own life.

Time was, when the author of *Parsifal* passed for a kind of saint; this was after his death, when, his magnificent efforts having brought about the organization of Bayreuth, there was a feeling that an immortal soul had left its tenement of clay and soared upward in the immaterial harmonies of that supreme masterwork. How could one whose incessant striving had attained such conclusion, be an ordinary man? The mere statement appeared superfluous, so far was he removed from the common standard!

However, he has been restored thereto—and by his own act. He has told us of his life, and thereby we have seen that

Wagner was not a saint, but a man;—a very great man, unquestionably, but now and then as great in the evil aspects of his human nature as in the supremacy of his genius.

As to that, even his contemporaries did not invariably deceive themselves. Let us read what was written by one of the most faithful adherents of "the cause," as they called it—Peter Cornelius:

His whole life is stamped with egoism; the rest of mankind was created solely for him, yet he has no place in his heart for them, he pays them no tribute of pure and sympathetic affection.

Cornelius takes note of his "power of absorption," of his "destructive influence" on any composer less fully equipped than himself. More than once Wagner invited him urgently to come and keep him company at the place he happened to be in; but does any one fancy that a proffer of friendly and disinterested hospitality was intended? Not in the least! "I can not be alone," thus he writes imperiously; "I have already had Bülow come; now I am still in need of you." But Cornelius was on his guard. "Wagner consumes me. . . . There is something stifling in his atmosphere; he scorches me and deprives me of air." All this was written in 1863 and 1864, in private records which were not published until long after the death of the writers.

These observations are entirely justified; they are susceptible of generalization, and might have been made by any of Wagner's friends. Most of these latter, in their admiration and devotion, immolated themselves; but Wagner's own avowals afford full and frank confirmation of the facts. To make him content he needs must be surrounded like a great lord by a tribe of vassals, each bringing whatever he could furnish to serve him. He appropriated the time of one, and the wife of another ("I had Bülow come," as we have already seen—Madame Bülow also!), the influence, or the talents, or the house, of others, not to mention their money. In a word, he considered that everything in the universe, or at the very least in the circle of his friends, belonged to him in fee simple and absolutely; they might have said as much, and some among them could not refrain from protesting:—the Wesendoncks, the Willes, the Bülows (as noted above!), and Röckel, and Fischer, and the Ritter family, and his publishers in Mayence and Leipzig, and his hosts and good friends in Vienna, Biberich, and elsewhere, and the excellent Liszt himself, and even the king of Bavaria!

Why should it not have been the same with regard to Berlioz?

The fact is, that Wagner, in his desire to conquer the world, had not waited until he was master in his own country before seeking to invade France; and in his imperturbable confidence in his mission he considered it to be a matter of course that Berlioz should aid him.

That was a singular view to take of the matter!

Accordingly, in a place where there was not room even for one, a position was claimed by another, and a stranger at that!

At this juncture the situation of Berlioz was a difficult one, and far less favorable than in 1839. Far from having made progress in the public estimation, the French artist had reaped, in his own land, nothing but mortifications for a number of years. The *Damnation de Faust*, destined to win universal applause in times to come, had fallen flat on its first production, and involved its author in ruin. Works of minor importance, like *l'Enfance du Christ*, had met with a better reception. But Berlioz cherished loftier aims. While Wagner, in the confinement of his Swiss exile, was patiently laying stone on stone for the imposing monument which was to arise in the tetralogy, *The Ring of the Nibelung*, Berlioz, wellnigh as solitary in the midst of Paris, labored on another epopee whose theme was drawn from the purest poetical sources of Latin tradition—*Les Troyens*. And even as Wagner, before he could see his work live, had to await the final conclusion of his striving in the erection of the theatre at Bayreuth, so Berlioz, though of lowlier ambition, was not to see his work produced under ordinary conditions; indeed, it was only long after his death that *Les Troyens*, divided into two parts and presented on two evenings, could finally be brought out in its integral form.

That some one else, an outsider, should arrive at this time to pose as a competitor, and attempt to take a place which the Frenchman vainly aspired to occupy in the future—that was the most inopportune move imaginable.

In fact, this fine friendship whose somewhat troublesome upbuilding in 1855 was detailed above, could not withstand the shock.

They met each other several times in the course of the following years; for Wagner, comparatively quiescent during the first years of his sojourn in Switzerland, was just then seized by a veritable mania for moving about. In 1858 we find him in Paris, whither he went (he says) on a pleasure trip, to rest himself after the composition of *Tristan und Isolde*, and to divert his mind from the strong passion which this work had inspired in him;—in reality, to look after his affairs and to prepare the way

for his art in France. Now, what does he find to say, in his memoirs, about his relations with Berlioz in that year? First: "I found him well disposed towards me, for I had informed him that I was in Paris only for the sake of diversion." As for himself: "Berlioz devoted an evening to a reading, for me alone, of the poem of *Les Troyens*, to my vast discomfort; the poem in itself, and the dry and theatrically affected declamation of the author, gave rise to a foreboding that the character of his music would be of a piece with them." Such was Wagner's sympathetic response to the grand Virgilian effort on which he found his friend engaged!

Thus, although apparently no difference had as yet arisen between them, it was thenceforward manifest that the alliance dreamed by Liszt was altogether too fragile. Berlioz, writing about the same time to his son, speaks of "that absurd school called, in Germany, the school of the future," adding, "they are determined to make me their leader and standard-bearer. I say nothing, I write nothing, I can only let them do as they please; people of sense can see how much truth there is in it." At Weimar he attended a representation of *Lohengrin*, and could not refrain from expressing himself with customary frankness concerning the faults he found in the work; whereby he greatly displeased the members of the group. To Princess Wittgenstein, the friend of Liszt, he wrote apropos of the style of dramatic music as he would write it: "Herein lies the crime of Wagner" And in his *Mémoires*, which he finished during this period, he makes only this brief allusion: "This school is now an accomplished fact in Germany, and I loathe it."

Hence, the first untoward incident would hasten an explosion. It came to pass in 1860, when Wagner, prosecuting his slow and tenacious campaign of invasion, arrived in Paris to give concerts of his works, as Berlioz had done before. He, too, ruined himself; but he did not care for that—he was not the one who had to pay. Later he accused Meyerbeer of having provoked the hostile state of mind manifested against him on this occasion in the Parisian press, and made pointed mention of this detail:—that the author of *Les Huguenots* had recently offered Mme. Berlioz a bracelet. As for that, we can confidently assert that Wagner's suspicions were wrongly directed, and, if he found Berlioz and his wife unfavorably disposed towards him, that Meyerbeer had nothing whatever to do with it. Wagner relates that on his arrival he went to see Berlioz to enlist his aid in the arrangement of his concerts; that Berlioz himself had obligingly yielded to

his request at first, but that Mme. Berlioz, on entering the scene, loudly protested: "What! are you giving M. Wagner advice about his concerts?"—and that the husband's obliging mood was thus turned into the reverse. That may be so, without Meyerbeer's having had a hand in it. Besides, let us not believe too blindly everything that Wagner says. He writes, on the same page, that on his first interview with Berlioz the latter "was unable to dissemble a nervous affright which was displayed in a positively painful manner in his attitude and countenance." Berlioz explained that he was suffering from a painful neuralgia, requiring a treatment which he had just been undergoing; and this was only too true, for this malady cruelly tormented him until he died. But Wagner did not take this excuse seriously, preferring once again to ascribe evil intentions to his interlocutor. To reassure him, he assured him that he had come to Paris simply to introduce certain of his compositions to the Parisians and to hear them himself; but that he had "absolutely renounced" the help of French representations of *Tannhäuser*—which was a fib, not to say a falsehood.

We know, in fact, that *Tannhäuser* was produced at the Opéra the following year, after a series of court intrigues in which the Austrian ambassador's lady played the leading rôle over against Napoleon III. For the time being (in 1860) Wagner contented himself with giving a concert, whose program was thrice repeated, in which he brought out the symphonic numbers and choruses that could be most effectively detached from *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin* and *Tristan und Isolde*.

Berlioz reviewed them in his feuilleton in the "Journal des Débats." He did so with impartiality, bestowing praise on certain pages of the works, alluding to the prelude to *Lohengrin* as a "masterpiece," regarding the theme of the wedding-march as "formidable, irresistible," extolling the brilliancy and superb pomp of the *Tannhäuser* march as well as "the power and grandeur" of the overture; but also making some reservations, occasionally severe, with respect to various peculiarities of style of which he did not approve, notably in referring to the prelude to *Tristan und Isolde*, a score so novel in form that it is not surprising that Berlioz, or any one else in France at that time, should fail to comprehend it on a first hearing.

He supplemented these comments by reflections of a general character, and by a statement of principles which was, in effect, a declaration of war. Berlioz, who at other times had discovered less animosity towards attempted innovations, now resolutely

took his stand as the champion of a classicism whose tradition, to be perpetuated, required (in his opinion) merely to be renovated through the accession of some new elements calculated to enrich and reinvigorate it; whereas "the school of the future" was (to his mind) a total subversion of the eternal conditions of the art; to the aforesaid school he attributed all sorts of designs, in some cases quite wrongly, and, after defining them in his own fashion, he solemnly declared:

If such be this religion, I am very far from professing it; I have never owned it, I do not own it, and I never shall own it.

I raise my hand, and swear: *Non credo*.

This was a formal disavowal, and the foundations of the Weimar School were shaken thereby. Thenceforward, in fact, there was no Weimar School, but each worked in his own way and on his own hook, whether in Germany or in France; Liszt himself soon deserted the town, and all the musical glory of the German school descended upon another city—Bayreuth.

As regards Berlioz, he had nearly reached the end of his career and of his life, and not until after his death did his country bestir itself to proffer him the rehabilitation which restored him to his true place in the domain of art.

In winding up our account of the personal relations of these two masters let us record the fact that, whereas the reiterated attacks of Wagner during twenty years and more had not succeeded in disturbing them, a single article by Berlioz sufficed to bring about the rupture. Wagner sought to answer Berlioz in the latter's own paper; he had slight difficulty in exposing his errors and showing how mistaken were the prevailing notions with regard to his (Wagner's) aims.

The art-work of the future, (he wrote, speaking of the book from whose title had been borrowed the very device of the School,) does not embody any of the absurdities foisted upon me, neither have I discussed the question of the grammar of music in any way whatever. My speculations have a somewhat loftier aim.

And this was the truth. But theories were then not under discussion; those of Wagner, set forth in a series of works not wholly easy of comprehension in their original language, were totally unknown to the Frenchmen of 1860, who, moreover, if they could have been acquainted with them, would not have approved of them. The only matter in question was the art-work, to which Berlioz, taken all in all, had always paid homage, despite certain reticences, during the very time when Wagner was speaking

of him with so great injustice; then there was the notion, still obscure, of the radical disparities between the classic Latin art to which Berlioz was proud to announce his adhesion, and the essentially Germanic art, destructive of the past, which was that of Wagner; finally, we have the melancholy spectacle of a quarrel between two men of genius, both innovators and in advance of their time, who had been thought to be two brothers, and who—the younger having come to dispute the elder's place in the sun, even in his own country—had become bitter enemies.

For the year was not yet ended when the order was given by the emperor of the French to bring out *Tannhäuser* on the stage of the Opéra at Paris, and to deny Wagner nothing to make him satisfied with the production.

As for *Les Troyens*, the French master's work remained in its portfolio, and could never be given at the Opéra, for which it had been written. Only a section of it, after waiting several years, was detached from the score to provide a spectacle on a lyric stage of second rank; and in Berlioz's death the sorrowful words which he wrote in his *Mémoires* were justified: "Oh, my noble Cassandra, my heroic virgin, resign myself I must—I shall never hear thee!"

It may be imagined that, confronted by such a piece of injustice, he could not contain his indignation. But it was impotent, and made no attempt to reach the world at large. As the music-critic of the "Journal des Débats," Berlioz protested solely by abstention, leaving to a colleague the care of writing a review of the representation of *Tannhäuser*. But in private correspondence he gave free rein to his anger. And when the production arranged by imperial incompetence had come to its scandalous conclusion, he clinched it with the bitter remark: "I am cruelly avenged!" A sorry revenge, that left thus beaten down and disarmed these two champions of the best of causes, who, instead of uniting their forces, had drawn apart, with the sole result of leaving the field free for a long time to come to their common foes!

For it was not until after many years that the rehabilitation of Berlioz began in France; and Wagner had fully as long to struggle before realizing the triumph of his art in his own land.

They were never to meet again. Berlioz ended his life without indicating by a single word in his writings that he was interested in any way whatsoever in the further career of his earlier comrade.

Wagner took the same course. When Berlioz died, he had no word of remembrance for him. He who, ever attentive to current events, had profited by the occasions afforded by the

decease of artists like Rossini, Spontini, Auber, and others less renowned, to devote long articles to them, contented himself with consigning the details of his varied intimacy with the French artist to his private diary, which was not to see the light until more than thirty years after his death.

This, by the by, was the way he treated all the leaders in thought with whom he came in conflict, for Berlioz was not the only one. It was precisely the same with Nietzsche, long the most intimate confidant of his highest conceptions, who broke away from him when he had appraised the man—even the artist—at his exact worth; from the day when their rupture was an accomplished fact, the philosopher's name was never again pronounced by the musician, nor would he have it mentioned in his presence.

Nevertheless, a few words escaping in the freedom of familiar intercourse attest that Wagner was sore at heart over these broken-off friendships. He once said, on meeting Nietzsche's sister: "Since your brother parted from me, I have been alone." And Kapellmeister Mottl, his faithful disciple, relates that one day when, possibly to flatter him, he amused himself by criticizing one of Berlioz's scores, Wagner fairly flew into a rage, shouting that the work of "a genius of that stature" ought to be treated with respect. It had been borne in upon him that there are certain heights whereon spirits of a loftier sort should meet; and he regretted that their mutual esteem had not been able to survive.

II

After this historical exposition of the conflict which resulted in their personal embroilment, we now have to elucidate the profound causes which rendered it equally impossible for Berlioz and Wagner to agree from the artistic point of view.

Even so, they had set out from the same point and, for a while, followed the same direction. Their lives, in both cases, were a striving against a musical conventionalism to whose destruction each devoted all his energies. But when it came to reconstruction, the monuments carved by their hands seemed to be of an absolutely different and, sometimes, contradictory nature.

However, let us seek their points of resemblance in the beginning. For their discovery, we must go back again to the outset of their careers.

As we have seen, Berlioz was, in point of age, ten years in advance of Wagner. And we know that he had employed them

well. The first pages of music which he wrote were a proof of his orchestral genius. The day he heard a Beethoven symphony, his course was set; then and there he declared his determination to continue the master's work by taking it up where the latter had laid it down. Pursuant to this purpose, he strove to enlarge the forms of the symphony, to augment its power of expression, and to enrich its tonal resources by enhancing the orchestral technique. Let us first of all consider this last part of his program.

Before he had created the *Symphonie fantastique*, even before he had heard a single German symphony, Berlioz had composed, following the forms of the French overture as written by Méhul, Cherubini, and others, *l'Overture des Francs-Juges*. In it, among motives in whose interweaving one may recognize the influence of a former period, he introduced a broad and sustained melody twice repeated by the powerful voices of all the trombones combined. This signified a veritable revolution from the very start—the creation of the modern orchestra. Up to that time, even in the mightiest of Beethoven's symphonies, the trombone, like the trumpet, had remained, with all its lustre, a simple harmonic instrument used, for the most part, to double the voices or to reinforce the chords; Berlioz transformed it into a bearer of melody whose power redoubles that of the entire orchestra. The *Symphonie fantastique*, the *Requiem*, the overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*, all in turn employ this novel resource. In *Roméo et Juliette* the unison trombones, repeating a melody previously sung by the oboe alone, lend to the love-lament a thrill of frenzy, while the violins and other shrill-toned instruments envelop this massive central chain with their brilliant and strongly marked figurations, this entire ensemble forming a web of which no earlier orchestra had known either the formula or the effect.

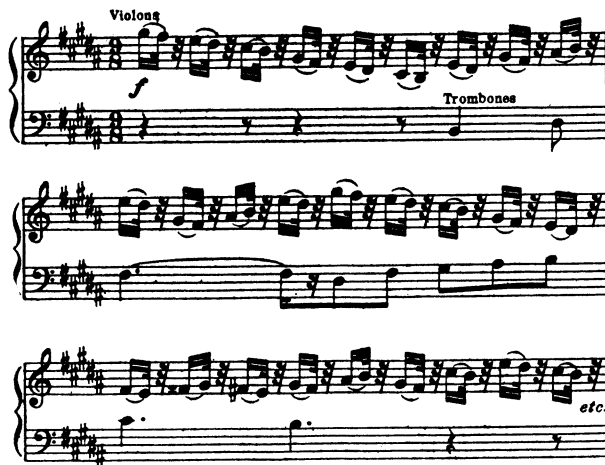
Wagner assisted at the initial production of *Roméo et Juliette*; he afterwards heard various other works by Berlioz. And when we hear the prelude to the third act of *Lohengrin*, the *Tannhäuser* overture, or the Ride of the Valkyries, down to the Summoning of the Knights in Parsifal, all uttered by the mighty voices of the trombones, we decide that the examples set by his predecessor were good lessons for him.

This direct influence did not, even at the time, escape the notice of perspicacious and well-informed minds. For instance, their mutual friend Franz Liszt, on sending Berlioz the score of the *Tannhäuser* overture and advising him to bring it out in France, added the significant words: "You will find something of your own in it." Indeed, Berlioz could scarcely help remarking

to himself that the landscape bore a familiar aspect, on reading the well-known passage beginning:



As a matter of fact, he himself some years earlier had written the *Serment de réconciliation*, the finale to the *Roméo et Juliette* symphony with which Wagner was among the first to become acquainted; and this piece was constructed with materials of which the following three measures embrace the essentials:



It will be admitted that the resemblance is striking; the figure in the violins, whose trenchant brilliancy dominates the graver sonority of the trombones, is nearly identical in the two numbers; and while the two melodies at the foundation of the musical structures exhibit greater divergences, they are none the less melodies of a common style, whose development proceeds in similar fashion enwreathed in the same counterpoint, and forming

an ensemble of such sort that the construction of the one is evidently modelled on that of the other.

But the orchestral inventions of Berlioz were not limited to the sole domain of powerful sonorities; our author made no less happy excursions into the tonal realm of the infinitely little. For example, and without further lingering over the matter, we shall call attention to the Scherzo in *Reine Mab* and the Dance of the Sylphs. But we should, preferably, lay the greater stress on certain pages of a contemplative or mystic character, such as—to mention only one—the Sanctus of the *Requiem*. Berlioz, in this Sanctus, was the first to employ those superacute harmonies which are so suited to the evocation of supernatural ideas and images, and which no one had conceived before. These harmonies have since found very frequent employment, and in very celebrated works: such are those which lend to *Lohengrin*—in the prelude, at the arrival of the mysterious hero, during the Recital of the Holy Grail—that superterrestrial color so warmly admired by Liszt on his first reading of the work.

Wagner was quite familiar with the Sanctus of the *Requiem*, for this number figured on the program of the concert given by Berlioz at Dresden, when his young colleague had just been appointed Kapellmeister; the latter had, indeed, conducted its rehearsal. And one can judge by the results that, although he criticized it, he was able to profit greatly by what this example taught him.

Wagner reproached Berlioz with being merely a musical mechanic, who had lost himself in the materialism of his combinations. But he himself had by no means disdained the apparatus—quite the contrary; and one might easily maintain that one of his chief merits was to make good usage of the invention which, verbally, he affected to contemn.

In point of fact, it was owing to his employment of this tonal material that Wagner was enabled to depict those splendid musical tableaux which are not the least among the things which contributed to his fame; like the prestidigital symphonic finale of *Götterdämmerung*, and that of *Die Walküre*, the Forest Murmurs, even the entr'acte in the Pilgrimage to Rome in *Tannhäuser*. But Berlioz himself had already painted pictures of the same genre and realized by the same means of his own creation: The Last Judgment in his *Requiem*, the *Course à l'abîme*, the *Marche au supplice*, down to the student-experiment of his descriptive symphony, the *Incendie de Sardanapale*—a mere attempt, but one in which we find the entire program, and

a beginning of the working-out, of the finale of *Götterdämmerung*.

Indubitably, Wagner perfected the apparatus by whose aid he was enabled to build up such tonal constructions; with an aptitude peculiar to the Germans he succeeded in elaborating it, and in so doing he outrivalled its very inventor. But when, instead of recognizing what he owed the latter, he took it upon himself to detract from his merit, as we have seen, we can rightly assert that he treated him with positive ingratitude.

Thus it was that Berlioz had "carried on" the symphony from the point where Beethoven left it, by enriching its material and enlarging its forms.

It was his further desire, as aforesaid, to enhance its power of expression. In this regard, he brought about a transformation of the symphony in which it became a veritable drama without words. No work, in this respect, possesses a higher significance than his *Roméo et Juliette*, a "dramatic symphony composed on the tragedy by Shakespeare," as he entitled it. The essential and fundamental ideas of the poem are represented musically by characteristic motives which transform and modify their features according to the progress of the action. The principle of the Leitmotiv (leading-motive), of which Wagner made so fruitful application in his dramas, is fully embodied in the symphony of Berlioz—and by this I do not mean *Roméo* only, for the *Symphonie fantastique*, with its "idée fixe," and *Harold*, in which the viola-part is a veritable singing character, had already furnished completely realized examples of the procedure. In *Roméo*, the love-theme, after having been stated for the first time, with fullest effusion, in the Prologue, is interwoven under most various aspects throughout the love-scene, the culminating point of the work; then, in the descriptive number "Romeo at the tomb of the Capulets," this melody which, in the foregoing passages, had worn a shape of plastic loveliness paired with an expression now contemplative and again ardently passionate, bursts forth anew at the moment of the awakening, breathless, hurried, in fearful suspense—all to be repeated later in the analogous figure with which the violins accompany the arrival of Tristan where Isolde awaits him, and their transports at the close of their night of love.

It is hardly surprising that the *Roméo* of Berlioz should remind us of the *Tristan* of Wagner; because, by the contour of its melody as well as by its oneness of intention, the principal love-theme of the latter work seems to have been patterned after

that of the prototype. It is worth while to demonstrate this affiliation by a comparison of the themes invented by the two musicians.

First let us take, in its complete form, the love-theme in Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*:



This melody is developed with sweeping breadth. Let us divide it into two portions, beginning with this one:



Now put this alongside of it:



In these few notes we recognize the essential motive which attains its development in "Isolde's Love-death," after having circulated with several repetitions and in different movements throughout the drama of *Tristan*. These two themes are so intimately related that the continuation of the Wagnerian motive, a pure and simple repetition of the figure last quoted, looks like a natural development of the Berlioz theme and its sequel. This we shall clearly perceive by letting the one follow the other; it will be seen that they blend as two parts of one whole—that, being two, they are but one.

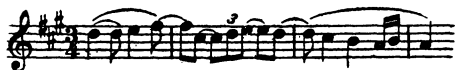


Now examine the second portion of the love-theme in *Roméo*. Here it is:



Now, in the second act of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, in the night scene wherein are so ingeniously combined a multiplicity of dramatic episodes, there is one motive which is introduced to bind them together, winding in and out to effect a

certain relaxation by its reflection of nocturnal mysteries. We have always greatly admired this musical phrase, with its intensity of poetic charm. Sung, by the violins, it unfolds itself in a leisurely development quite at variance with the habits of Wagnerian melody; it begins thus:



But this, too, is found in *Roméo et Juliette*! Allowing for some differences in notation more apparent than real, and which are merely tricks of interpretation, it is the second portion of the theme we gave in the preceding quotation!

So it would seem that Wagner did not waste that day—the 24th of November, 1839—when, soon after arriving in Paris, he heard for the first time the dramatic symphony of *Roméo et Juliette* by Berlioz! He could readily perceive the defects of the work, but he was equally ready to insulate and assimilate its vital substance. The defects were the target of his criticism, and to them he directed public attention with avidity; at the bottom of his heart, however, he may possibly have recognized his injustice, and we seem to perceive an involuntary note of repentance in the simple sentence with which he offers Berlioz the first copy of the engraved score of *Tristan*:

“Au cher et grand auteur de *Roméo et Juliette*, l’auteur reconnaissant de *Tristan et Ysolde*.” (To the revered and illustrious author of *Roméo et Juliette*, the grateful author of *Tristan und Isolde*.)

“Grateful”! Although it was not his customary attitude, Wagner might well have been so, for he owed much to the artist who first showed him the way and provided the models which he sometimes, as we have just seen for ourselves, followed very faithfully.

Thus Berlioz and Wagner, later the dearest enemies, began by going hand in hand along the same new path; the elder setting the younger an example which the latter did not at first refuse to follow. They both applied their genius to the enrichment of the orchestra, augmenting its power and brilliancy, making it the principal instrumentality of modern music; and this striving, realized so admirably by them both, constitutes an undeniable point of resemblance.

It is, perhaps, the only one subsisting between them from a musical point of view. In all other regions of the domain of art their mutual resemblance ceases.

With regard to style in writing, they were brought up in two different schools, and the impress of their origin was strong and lasting.

Berlioz is essentially a harmonist employing the system of accompanied melody, being thus a successor of the earlier French masters. Wagner is a polyphonist, continuing in his works the tradition of Bach.

His writing is horizontal. Berlioz, on the contrary, save in exceptional and premeditated cases, regularly proceeds by vertical chords. He likes to employ broad melodies, themes of extended development; these are his peculiar preoccupation, and we have already seen that he wrote, in allusion to Wagner: "I have never dreamt of composing music without melody. This school is now an accomplished fact in Germany, and I loathe it." To the statement that he had always sought "to fill his compositions with a flood of melody" he added: "However, these melodies were frequently so considerably prolonged, that nearsighted intellects could not distinguish their form clearly; or they were wedded to other secondary melodies which veiled their outline; or, finally, these melodies are so dissimilar to the little nonentities that are called melodies by the lower musical classes, that these latter cannot bring themselves to call them by the same name."

Wagner's designs in the matter of musical style were wholly different; this he himself denotes by a simple sentence in his reply to Berlioz's criticisms, in 1860:

I have not raised the question whether it is or is not allowable to introduce neologisms in respect of harmony or melody, neither have I discussed the question of the grammar of music in any way whatever. My speculations have a somewhat loftier aim.

Furthermore, as Berlioz, no less than Wagner, strove to enrich the forms which he had adopted and devoted himself to the search after novel effects, they necessarily met again at various times at some given point, but always in readiness to cut loose from it and fly off in opposite directions.

Each assumed the task of freeing himself from the bondage then imposed by a rigorous observance of the laws of tonality; but it was in the concatenation of melodic forms that Berlioz found the path of this new freedom, as whose guiding principle he assumed the expressive accent and the diversity of emotional effect contained in any given melody; whereas Wagner, proceeding by the method of symphonic development, sought to gain every possible advantage, to the extremest limit, from the system of the succession of chords.

They both made liberal use of chromatics, whose powers of expression have ever been recognized, and which Jean-Jacques Rousseau very neatly defined when he called them "admirable for the expression of pain and affliction; with their insistent ascending tones they harrow the soul." In Berlioz, this style operates through alteration of degrees in the melodic line only; it finds employment in the "themes" rather than in the "accompaniments," and is especially characteristic in melodies developed at length and without any harmonic additions; such as the motive of Romeo's Sadness, the subjects of the fugues in the Offertory of the *Requiem*, in the Funeral Procession of Juliette, and in the introduction to the second part of the *Damnation de Faust*. In Wagner, on the other hand, and more particularly in his later works, the use of chromatics is almost exclusively harmonic. One could hardly find a more characteristic example of his method than is afforded by an analysis of the opening chords in the prelude to *Tristan und Isolde*—chords formed of notes which are scale-degrees in which, of the four parts composing the complete harmony, two and often three parts are altered.

Advancing yet further, Wagner, in certain works (like *Siegfried*), makes an almost continual and extremely fruitful use of enharmonics. In this he resolutely draws apart from Berlioz, to whom it was not given to follow him on a path unknown and opposed to his own course. M. Saint-Saëns has made some observations, both interesting and sagacious, on this head; we cannot do better than insert them here:

Since J. S. Bach (so he writes) insured the triumph of enharmonics with his Well-tempered Clavichord, the forms of art have been reconstituted. But Berlioz, who was no pianist, was possessed of an instinctive aversion for enharmonics. Therein he is the antipodes of Richard Wagner, the incarnation of enharmonics, who has drawn from this principle its extreme consequences.

These remarks of M. Saint-Saëns are doubly valuable; first, in themselves and as coming from such a master; and also because he had the privilege of knowing Berlioz and Wagner and of assisting, so to speak, at the inception of their conflict. It cannot, therefore, be out of place to repeat them here; and we add the following:

Berlioz detested *Tristan und Isolde*. As I could speak with him without reserve, I made no bones of challenging his opinion and expressing the admiration with which the general conception and a large part of the work of the great Richard inspired me. Then it was that his profound antipathy to the enharmonic dissonances and modulations was brought home to me in full force. There are, to be sure, plenty

of harsh passages in his own works, but they result from a totally different system.

And more recently, apropos of Meyerbeer, M. Saint-Saëns thus sums up the discussion:

Enharmonics—dissonances resolving one into the other indefinitely—endless melody—all these familiar processes of the “music of the future,” were held in abhorrence by Berlioz. . . . He did not admit that the voice should be sacrificed, relegated to the rank of a simple unit in the orchestra. . . . What dissimilarities in the style of these two geniuses, even in their manner of treating the orchestra and the voices, their construction of the musical phrase, their conception of the lyric drama!

And the author of *Samson et Dalila* derides the attempts to fit “the heads of Wagner and Berlioz with the same cap; this forced promiscuity (so he concludes) will excite the wonder of future ages.”

Hence, from a purely musical point of view, there are wide divergences between Berlioz and Wagner. They are no less marked from the standpoint of the fundamental principle of the art.

This principle, as we have already affirmed, is the Beethoven symphony, established as the basis of their musical conception of the drama. But, while Berlioz strove to make a drama of the symphony, Wagner sought to make a symphony of the drama. The former wrote *Roméo et Juliette*, a “dramatic symphony”; the latter, *Tristan*, the *Ring*, *Parsifal*, “music-dramas.” And this divergence in orientation is so sharp, its results so antagonistic, that it suffices in itself to cause an irreconcilable opposition between the two. Berlioz writes:

Free and all-powerful music can disdain its puissant and frequently dangerous auxiliary, dramatic art; all-sufficient to itself, it gives proof positive of the immensity of its power and the beauty of its genius.

Elsewhere he says, aiming directly at his antagonist:

Music ought not to be the humiliated slave of the word. That is the crime of Wagner; he seeks to dethrone music, to reduce it to expressive accents, by exaggerating the method of Gluck (who himself, most happily, did not succeed in following his impious theory). I am for that music which you yourself call free. Ay, free and proud, and all-powerful and all-conquering!

As for Wagner, he sums up his conception in these imperious words: “There is but one thing that can save Berlioz—the drama!”

In reality, these explicit declarations are needless, for their works bear living witness to the diversity of their ideas. True it is, that Berlioz was most completely himself in the works which

he wrote wholly outside the influence of the theatre. And when he, in his turn, resolved on the production of his dramatic epopee, *Les Troyens*, he set about it quite differently from Wagner when composing the *Ring*. Without renouncing the employ of musical resources wherein he was a past-master, his guiding thought was the supremacy of the voices, of expressive declamation, of pure song.

With Wagner, on the contrary, at least in his last works, the vocal part is nothing more than a notation of the words, whose accents rise here and there to grand lyric outbursts, but in which no genuine musical interest resides; this latter lies entirely in the orchestra, in the expressive symphony, bearing a flood of speech abundant and pliant as an oration. For us their interest and beauty are matters of familiar comprehension, for we, of a later generation, have learned from childhood to understand and admire them. Let us, however, concede that those whose training was of earlier date were excusable for not forcibly transferring their attention, on the shortest notice, from the point to which it had always been persistently directed; and that, in order to appreciate the merits of so novel a form, its underlying principle had first to be recognized. This was difficult of accomplishment for those in France who, towards 1860, with all their atavistic and racial logic, had never dreamed that the theatre was invented to the end that actors charged with representing an action on the stage should confine their rôles to gestures and attitudes, while contenting themselves with uttering words generally drowned by the orchestra and ill understood by their auditors—the instruments meantime being entrusted with the mission of speaking for them. These are questions attaching to the first principles of the lyric drama, and it is allowable to carry out their application in a way other than that chosen by Wagner. Indeed, Berlioz found a different meaning in these same principles,—and *Les Troyens* is, for all that, a work lofty in conception and realizing the noblest ideal.

And so, in despite of first appearances, Berlioz and Wagner offer in their tendencies as well as in their works a wellnigh permanent contrast. And it is not merely in matters of art that each is set over against the other; they are antagonistic in every fibre of their being. Though very nearly of an age, the ten years intervening between them were sufficient to render them representatives of two different and hostile generations. Berlioz is the man of 1830, Wagner of 1848—two decisive epochs in the history of nations, and both accompanied by great conflicts and cruel devastation. Berlioz, a revolutionary by birth, desired that

order, based on the triumph of his cause, should be immediately reëstablished. Wagner goes much further; he felt no dread of the effects of sweeping changes, and would gladly have undermined the foundations of society. On the day of the most decisive act of his life, his ear caught the words of Bakunin, stirring him painfully and profoundly—far more so than he himself ever admitted. His dream of art is essentially the realization of ideas fathered by this contact. And let no one fancy that these general tendencies were without an effective influence on the artistic courses pursued by these two masters; on the contrary, their result was evident and immediate. Berlioz, for all his appetite for innovation, remains a traditionalist; he seeks to augment the stores accumulated by the past, but never dreams of destroying that past. Wagner goes a long way further; he endeavors to point out the errors in all works of human genius antedating his own; not one stone would he leave upon another in his attempt to create an entirely new world.

Following their prodigious effort, they both appeared to be vanquished, and for the time being they actually were so. Their cause did not win through until long after the action, when their environment had gained maturer vision. But in order to attain (at least in part) the aim of their dreams, a king's intervention was needed in Wagner's case; whereas the posthumous triumph of Berlioz, due altogether to the spontaneous, albeit tardy, admiration of the public in his native land, was essentially popular and national.

Finally, there subsists between Berlioz and Wagner one more—and very considerable—point of difference. This is, that the one is French, the other German.

During their lifetime, they themselves were not aware that this diversity of origin must, in itself alone, be the cause of so deep-seated an estrangement. But to-day this fact must be recognized: Berlioz and Wagner could not live in amity for the reason that they were born enemies.

Berlioz is a Frenchman. This he is, not simply as the scion of an ancient family in the Dauphiné, in the valley of the Rhone, in a region well towards southern France; his right to that title springs besides, and above all, from the nature of his genius.

Nota bene, even of this fact he himself was not fully aware. Because he, in his youth, had listened to the works of Weber and Beethoven with admiration, and his spirit had received their impress, it came about that he described himself as "I, a three-quarters German musician." This similitude did not escape the

notice of others, particularly of those interested in turning it to account. On his return from a concert-tour in Germany, and telling, in a private letter, of the success he had reaped, he added: "My sole misfortune is—that I am French; that worries them. The other day the ladies of the Sing-Academie said to me, with a kind of impatience: 'But why do you not speak German, Monsieur Berlioz? That ought to be your language. You are German.'"—So, as early as 1853, the ladies of Leipzig wanted to annex Berlioz! Before that time, immediately after their first meetings, Wagner had written: "From remotest Germany the spirit of Beethoven has breathed upon him, and assuredly there have been hours when Berlioz wished that he was a German."

Such impressions are purely superficial, and form an absolute contradiction of the reality.

No;—Berlioz must not be considered to be a German because he admired Beethoven and felt his influence, any more than because he adopted the form of the symphony. And first of all we should have to concede that Beethoven's genius is essentially German, which could be very stoutly contested, his genius possessing a character of universality which places it on a far higher plane than the German nature.

As for the symphony, that also is by no means the appanage and property of Germany. By origin it is Italian, and the French had been composing symphonies for many a year when Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven came to endow this form with their divine genius.

This delimiting of its domain for each nation—giving the opera to Italy, attributing the symphony to Germany, and leaving France nothing but comedy-opera—proceeds from a wrong notion. Musical France has works of higher import to her credit. She it was who, at the time of the Renaissance, furnished the first models—among them perfected ones—of that vocal polyphony by which the German eighteenth century so greatly profited. Should a Frenchman, then, be forbidden to revive a form favorable to the development of his genius because, before him, it had been turned to lofty use by Germans?

The truth is, that the genius of Berlioz was eminently French in cast—more "eminently French" than that of our concoctors of opéras comiques, for he asserted the highest qualities of his race. Into a form which is not German, but universal, this man of the South breathed an inspiration at once abundant and wholly French. He was a man of that generation of 1830 whose artistic endeavor brought a realization of the loftiest aspirations

of the foregoing epoch—an historical epoch in whose course the French nation rallied to its mightiest and most lasting achievement.

We have already had occasion to recall that Nietzsche sought to oppose the Germanic conception of the Wagnerian drama by what he termed Mediterranean music. To exemplify the difference, he could find nothing better than the rather inadequate illustration of *Carmen*. He might have lent additional weight to his argument by referring to the works of Berlioz, which he may not have known. Yes, if Nietzsche had known *Les Troyens*, he would have chosen it for that monument of Mediterranean art wherewith he wished to confront the art of the North. And having, during our study of the general tendency of Berlioz, reached the conclusion that he was a man of tradition, we might have added, that he was a continuator of the Latin tradition. Just for that reason he could not help being hostile to the manifestations of a racial genius which was, from all eternity, the foe of Latin genius.

Returning to Wagner, there is no need of searching after special proofs to convince any one that he was German. It is unthinkable that the remotest doubt could arise concerning the national status of the man who, on the day of triumph when Bayreuth was inaugurated, could not restrain the heartfelt exclamation: "At last we have a German art!"—and who concluded *Die Meistersinger* with a manifesto whose spirit, quite out of keeping with the historical Hans Sachs, expressed the Wagner of 1862, this homage to said German art being accompanied by threats and hateful appeals against what he calls "falsche wälsche Majestät, . . . wälschen Dunst mit wälschem Tand."¹ We should even find little difficulty in overpassing the limits prescribed by the purely artistic character of this study, and showing, by citation from his literary works, that Wagner was one of the most orthodox forerunners of that Pangermanism whose device is "Deutschland über alles."

¹*Ed.* The author adds the original German words to his French translation—"les frivolités welsches, les niaiseries welsches, la fausse majesté welsche." As the reader will remember, Wagner's lines read (with translation by Dr. Baker appended):

Zerfällt erst deutsches Volk und Reich,
in falscher wälscher Majestät
kein Furst bald mehr sein Volk versteht;
und wälschen Dunst mit wälschem Tand
sie pflanzen uns ins deutsche Land.

Once German folk and realm are cleft,
In his false Latin majesty
No prince his people's soul will know;
And Latin tricks and trumpery
In German soil they then will sow.

His nature is essentially that of an overlord, invader, conqueror. From the outset, as we have seen, he fell foul of Berlioz. The latter undoubtedly undertook what he himself called his German campaigns; but, conformably to true French tradition, he set out on these expeditions with no intent to dethrone any one, in a spirit of persuasion, with the single purpose of sowing the good word, of carrying onward the beneficent light; like the philosophers of the eighteenth century, such as Voltaire and Diderot, who, in answer to the call of monarchs beyond the boundaries of their country, journeyed to Russia, to Prussia, to Sweden, conveying thither the treasures of French civilization and French thought. But whenever Wagner came to France, he appeared as an invader with arms in hand, aiming to oust those whom he found in settled positions, and to impose his leadership; and, failing of success, he avenged himself during the war of 1870 by wantonly insulting the nation temporarily prostrated—the country, the city and the men who were guilty of resisting him.¹

Is it necessary to draw a conclusion from this lengthy comparison? No—surely not. Everybody will be entirely capable of drawing his own inferences therefrom; as for ourselves, it seems preferable, after having faithfully set forth the facts, to let them speak for themselves. At the very least, however, we may venture to deplore the circumstance that human works, which should be conceived in gladness and bring only gladness to the world, should bear within themselves the germ of war; and that the noblest manifestations of the mind, and—as it would seem—the most disinterested ones, are not permitted free development in peace. But what is gained by dwelling on these vain regrets? There is a grain of truth in the opinion of the German philosopher who asserted that music is the very essence of things; there subsists a close correlation between the life of nations and men, and that of the arts. Our comparative inquiry into the fortunes of the two greatest masters of music in France and Germany in the course of the nineteenth century has supplied fresh proofs of the truth of that assertion.

¹Mr. Tiersot alludes to Wagner's "Eine Kapitulation, Lustspiel in antiker Manier." This unfortunate, feeble and amateurish play, Wagner planned for music "à la Offenbach" whose genius he fully appreciated. Whether or no "Eine Kapitulation" meant to add insult to injury, is a matter of controversy. For Wagner's own denial read his prefatory note; and for a critical, impartial review, not colored with semi-political considerations of Wagner and his art, consult Mr. J. G. Prod'homme's essay "Richard Wagner et le public français," in "La revue de Hollande." 1915, vol. I, p. 405-444.—*Ed.*